POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN 2003

For every year following a census, the U.S. Census Bureau publishes population estimates as of July 1, using information on births, deaths, and domestic and international migration. The results are used to determine federal funding allocations, to monitor population trends, and to provide control populations used for weighting purposes in surveys. The estimates in this report are for July 1, 2003, and cover the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The Nation and Regions

Between Census Day (April 1, 2000) and July 1, 2003, the resident population of the United States grew from 281.4 million to 290.8 million, an increase of 3 percent. During this time period, 13.1 million U.S. residents were born and 7.9 million died, creating a "natural increase" of 5.2 million people. The net increase from international migration (in-migrants minus out-migrants) added another 4.2 million people.

Between Census Day and July 1, 2003, the West was the fastest growing region, increasing by 5 percent (Figure 1). The South had the second-fastest growth rate—4 percent. In contrast, the growth rates in the Midwest and the Northeast were about half the rate of the country as a whole, 1.6 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively.

Among the country's four statistical regions, the South was the most populous in 2003, containing 104.5 million people, or 36 percent of the U.S. total. The West and Midwest followed with 66.5 million and 65.4 million people, respectively. The Northeast had the smallest population, totaling 54.2 million people.

Words That Count

Population estimates, as produced by the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, are approximations of populations for past dates. The calculations begin with the last census numbers, which are updated using data on births, deaths, and migration. Estimates of international and internal population movement are developed from tax returns, Medicare enrollment, and immigration data. The population estimates in this report are based on Census 2000. The numbers in this report cover the 50 states and the District of Columbia, but do not include Puerto Rico or any of the U.S. island areas: the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Resident population includes all people living in the United States.

Civilian noninstitutionalized population is the basic population represented in the surveys used in this report: the Current Population Survey (CPS), the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), and the American Housing Survey (AHS). It includes everyone living in the United States who is not in an institution (such as a prison or nursing home) or living on a military base.[1] The 2003 civilian noninstitutionalized population (285.5 million) was smaller than the resident population (290.8) because it did not include people in the military or in institutions, such as nursing homes and prisons. The two population universes also differed from one another in age and sex distribution, but differences were generally small. The resident population contained a higher proportion of men than the civilian noninstitutionalized population, 49.1 percent compared with 48.8 percent. It also contained a higher proportion of older adults (those 65 and older), 12.4 percent compared with 12.0 percent.

The four **statistical regions of the United States** are groups of states for which data are presented. They include the Northeast, the Midwest, the South, and the West, as shown in Figure 1.

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[1] Members of the armed forces who live off post or who live with their families on post are included in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the CPS, as long as one civilian adult lives in the same household. The "regular" CPS never includes people in the military, but it does include other household members living with someone in the military, as long as there is one civilian adult in the household. The AHS includes people in the military living off base in the United States.

The 50 States and the District of Columbia

July 1, 2003, marked the 17th consecutive year that Nevada was the fastest-growing state. With a 12-percent gain since Census 2000, Nevada's total population stood at 2.2 million in 2003. With a 9-percent increase since Census Day, Arizona was the second-most rapidly growing state. Florida ranked third with an increase of 6 percent.

Between April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003, North Dakota and the District of Columbia lost population. North Dakota's population was 1.3 percent smaller than it was on Census Day and the District of Columbia's population declined 1.5 percent.
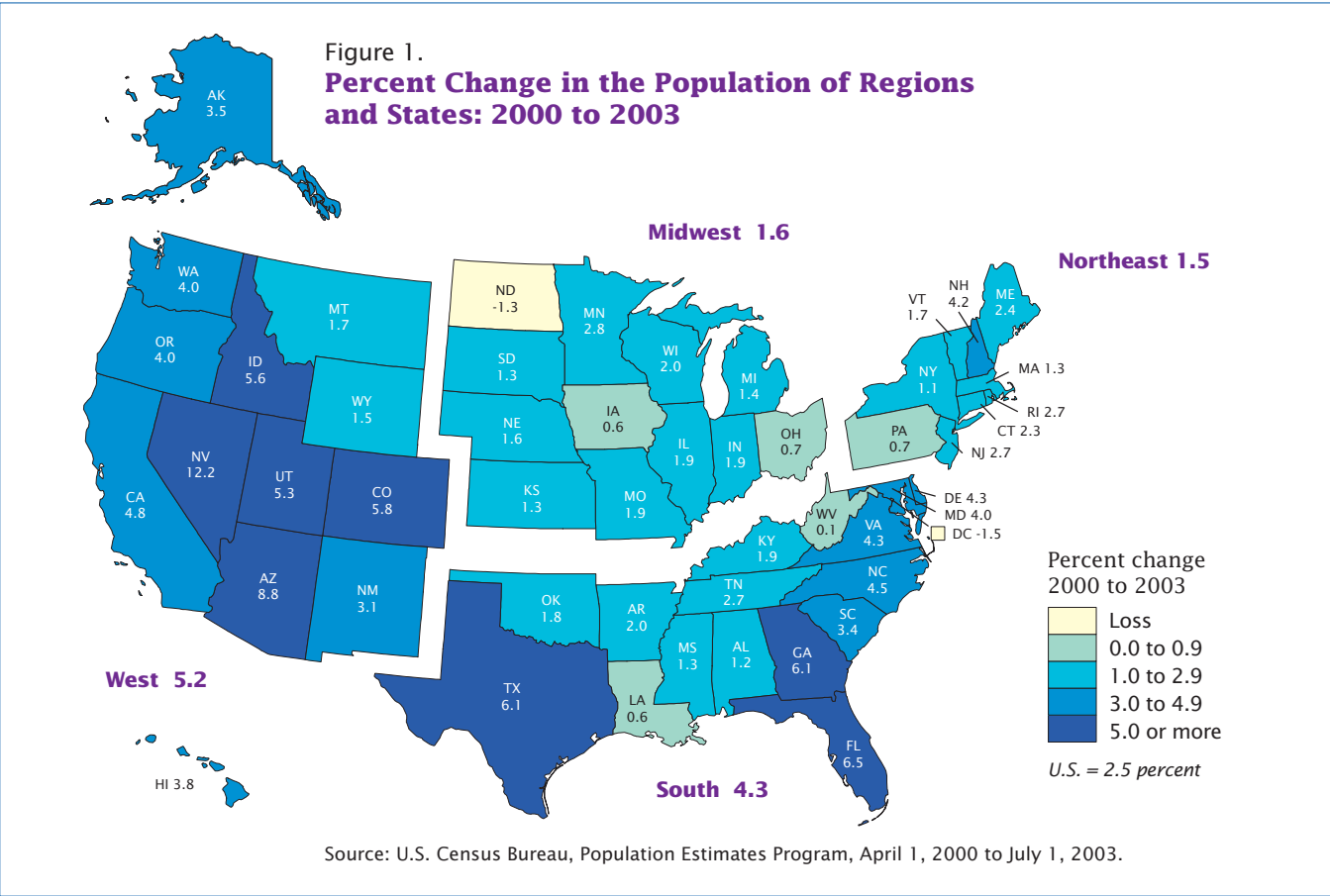
Figure 1.
Percent Change in the Population of Regions and States: 2000 to 2003

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2003.

Table 1.
Ten Fastest-Growing Counties With Populations of 10,000 or More: 2000 to 2003

(Population in thousands)

Rank	County	Population		Change 2000 to 2003	
		April 1, 2000	July 1, 2003	Numerical	Percent
1	Loudoun, VA	169.6	221.7	52.1	30.7
2	Chattahoochee, GA	14.9	19.3	4.5	29.9
3	Douglas, CO	175.8	223.5	47.7	27.1
4	Rockwall, TX	43.1	54.6	11.6	26.8
5	Forsyth, GA	98.4	123.8	25.4	25.8
6	Henry, GA	119.3	150.0	30.7	25.7
7	Flagler, FL	49.8	62.2	12.4	24.8
8	Newton, GA	62.0	76.1	14.1	22.8
9	Paulding, GA	81.6	94.2	12.6	15.4
10	Kendall, IL	54.5	66.6	12.0	22.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, April 1, 2000 and July 1, 2003.

Table 2.
Ten Largest U.S. Cities: 2000 and 2003

(Population in thousands)

Rank	County	Population		Change 2000 to 2003	
		April 1, 2000	July 1, 2003	Numerical	Percent
1	New York, NY	8,008.7	8,085.7	77.1	1.0
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,694.7	3,820.0	125.2	3.4
3	Chicago, IL	2,896.0	2,869.1	-26.9	-0.9
4	Houston, TX	1,953.6	2,009.7	56.1	2.9
5	Philadelphia, PA	1,517.6	1,479.3	-38.3	-2.5
6	Phoenix, AZ.	1,321.2	1,388.4	67.2	5.1
7	San Diego, CA	1,223.4	1,266.8	43.3	3.5
8	San Antonio, TX	1,151.3	1,214.7	63.4	5.5
9	Dallas, TX	1,188.6	1,208.3	19.7	1.7
10	Detroit, MI	951.3	911.4	-39.9	-4.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, April 1, 2000 and July 1, 2003.

California remained the most populous state, with 35.5 million people in 2003. California's population constituted 12 percent of the U.S. total. The second- and third-most populous states were Texas (22.1 million) and New York (19.2 million). The least-populated states in 2003 were Wyoming (501,000), Vermont (619,000), and North Dakota (634,000). The District of Columbia's population was 563,000.

Counties

With population increases of about 30 percent between Census Day and July 2003, Loudoun County, Virginia, and Chattahoochee County, Georgia, were the fastest-growing counties with populations of 10,000 or more, as shown in Table 1. Two of the ten fastest-growing counties during this time period were outside the South—Douglas County, Colorado, in the West and Kendall County, Illinois, in the Midwest. Four of the fastest-growing counties were in Georgia (Forsyth, Henry, Newton, and Paulding), one was in Texas (Rockwall), and one was in Florida (Flagler). The majority of the 3,141 U.S. counties grew between April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003.

The most populous county in 2003 was Los Angeles County, California—9.9 million. The second-most populous county in the country was Cook County, Illinois (which includes Chicago), with 5.4 million people. It was followed by Harris County, Texas (which includes Houston), with 3.6 million people, and Maricopa County, Arizona (which includes Phoenix), with 3.4 million people.

Places

While the country as a whole grew by 3 percent between Census Day (April 1, 2000) and July 1, 2003,

the fastest-growing place with more than 100,000 people grew at nearly 10 times that rate. Gilbert, Arizona's growth rate, 32 percent, brought that city's population up to 145,000. North Las Vegas, Nevada, had the second-fastest growth rate (25 percent) and Henderson, Nevada, was third (23 percent). Among the remaining cities in the top ten fastest-growing, three were in California (Irvine, Rancho Cucamonga, and Fontana) and two were in Arizona (Chandler and Peoria). Two were outside the West, and both of these were in Florida (Port St. Lucie and Cape Coral).

Since Census 2000, the ten largest places in the United States have not changed (Table 2). New York City topped the list in 2003, with a population of 8.1 million. Los Angeles (3.8 million) and Chicago (2.9 million) ranked second and third. San Antonio, with a population of 1.2 million, was the fastest-growing city among the top ten largest cities. With an increase of 6 percent since Census Day, San Antonio passed Dallas to become the eighth-largest city in the country. Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit had population decreases: 1 percent, 3 percent, and 4 percent, respectively.

The Census Bureau Can Tell You More

For more detailed information, go to the U.S. Census Bureau's Estimates Program Web site <www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>.

Look for information on related topics on the Census Bureau's Web site <www.census.gov>.

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